Modern American Art

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MODERN

AMERICAN ART

THIRTY PHOTOGRAVURES OF PAINTINGS
AND STATUARY BY AMERICAN ARTISTS

WITH TEXT BY
RIPLEY HITCHCOCK, CHARLES DE KAY
AND OTHERS

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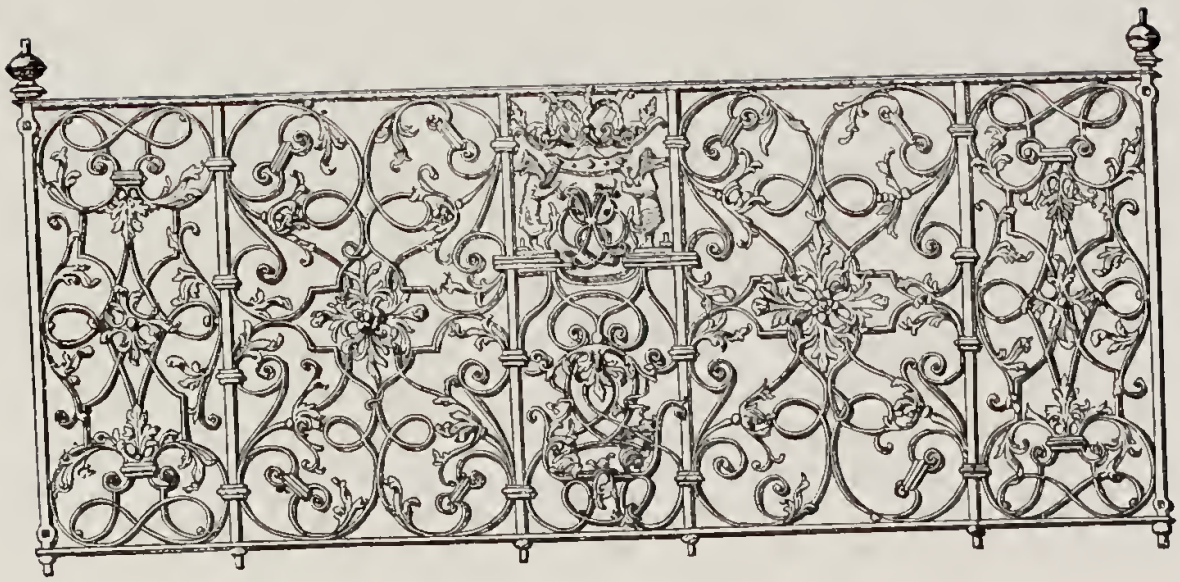
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1	A PORTRAIT	WYATT EATON
2	EVENING	ALEXANDER HARRISON
3	MANDOLINATA	HERBERT DENMAN
4	DIANA	OLIN L. WARNER
5	ALONG THE POND	C. HARRY EATON
6	A PORTRAIT	J. S. HARTLEY
7	THE SILENCE BROKEN	GEORGE DE FOREST BRUSH
8	VIVIAN	J. CARROLL BECKWITH
9	AN OLD SHAVER	THOMAS HOVENDEN
10	EVENING	ROBERT C. MINOR
11	BY THE FOUNTAIN	WILL H. LOW
12	FLIRTATION	C. D. WELDON
13	EVENING, HARLEM RIVER	ARTHUR PARTON
14	SEE-SAW, MARGERY DAW	S. J. GUY
15	THE SPIRIT OF THE LILY	WALTER SHIRLAW
16	OLIVIA, FROM THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD	GEORGE H. BOUGHTON
17	A WOODLAND SCENE	GEORGE INNESS
18	FIRST DREAM OF LOVE	EDWARD R. THAXTER
19	THE STILL HUNT	EDWARD KEMYS
20	WONT PLAY	FRANCIS C. JONES
21	LAKE PLACID, ADIRONDACKS	J. B. BRISTOL
22	DAVID BEFORE THE COMBAT	GEORGE T. BREWSTER
23	MEDITATION	W. M. CHASE
24	EARLY SPRING	H. BOLTON JONES
25	AFTER THE GALE	R. CLEVELAND COXE
26	THE TIGER LILY	EDWIN H. BLASHFIELD
27	LOVE'S TOKEN	FREDERIC W. FREER
28	AUTUMN GRASSES	C. Y. TURNER
29	A PORTRAIT	J. ALDEN WEIR
30	A BREEZY DAY	M. F. DE HAAS



An American Painter

THE favorite adjective used by Europeans when they wish to cloak a sneer at American art is eclectic. They mean thereby that Americans have no national traits in the fine arts, but roam through the old nations absorbing the ideas of German, Frank and Italian with equal facility, being destitute of originality and therefore compelled to levy upon others for those vivifying thoughts which are changed, diluted, translated into images in the fine arts.

There is some truth in this sneer, as there is in many disagreeable statements; but the present age has brought home to Europeans as never before that portion of it which contains the most warrant for the sneer itself. Thirty years ago our few painters in Brussels and Paris, our few sculptors in Florence and Rome, were quantities rightly neglected in the oversight of European art. Not so now. The big, go-ahead republic sends its thousands across the ocean to the old cities, where art has been a trade and a road to distinction for who knows how many centuries; and, what is worse, the students from the other side of the Atlantic do not always go home cleverly like good children, on the completion of their course, but linger about the place and have the temerity to set up shop for themselves next door to their teachers. If they do not surpass the latter, they sometimes equal them, and by their skill, industry and superior knowledge of the social world push their fortunes with remarkable success.

Now it is these Europeanized but not always un-Americanized artists who give Europeans an impression of American art. Small blame that they should. For a visit to the United States would not be enough to instruct a foreigner in the real situation of American art; he would need to stay here several years and study the question. From whom, then, can foreigners be expected to judge, save from the gentlemen and ladies who are so clever as to assimilate European work and actually compete with the artists of the old country on their own soil?

In Mr. Winslow Homer the facile Americans who reflect Bouguereau, Gérôme or Piloty, who are Fortuny-mad or subject to the massive genius of Jean François Millet, find their opposite and counterpoise. The difficulty he has shown in taking impressions of foreign art is almost ludicrous when comparisons are drawn between him and other American workmen. Born in Boston, he went to work with a lithographer before he was twenty, and in his twenty-fourth year left his native city for New York, where his education and career as an artist have passed. The singular part of Mr. Homer's development was its slowness. He seems to have inherited along with his baptismal name the characteristic expressed by the punning legend of the Winslow family of England and Massachusetts Colony. The rush and smartness of the great city affected him little; he neither brought from Yankeeland the proverbial versatility of the Down Easter nor assimilated on this great stage of the Yankee's activity the ability to push and quickly succeed. He is the author of the complaint attributed to many others, "For fifteen years the press has called me 'a promising young artist,' and I am tired of it." For Mr. Homer has a dry, thin humor entirely individual, which rarely turns unkind, a humor reserved for his intimates and seldom permitted to enter into his painted work.

A graduate of the schools of the National Academy, of which he has long been a prominent member, he went to the war in 1860 and furnished sketches to *Harper's Weekly* and other illustrated papers. In and following the war times came his first successes, which were not followed by that constant and increasing appreciation which is almost always the lot of men who make their mark in other professions. Especially did Prisoners from the Front, an oil painting formerly in the gallery of Mr. John Taylor Johnston, make an epoch in his career. The Union officer is a portrait of General Francis C. Barlow and the prisoners are types of Southern swashbucklers, youths and graybeards. At this period Mr. Homer was by no means certain of his drawing of the figure, more especially of the female figure, and in this respect, as well as in the management of color, showed a lack of suppleness of mind. About 1867, when he traveled in Europe, it was supposed that the sight of the perfection of technical processes reached by foreign artists would improve his own workmanship. But here that obtuseness so unlike the alarming precocity of some American youths showed itself once more. He looked, he saw, doubtless he understood. But the character native to the man was too much for him. Shall we say that it was a pity? No; for it is just this slowness to take suggestions that has made Mr. Homer, with all his limitations, the refreshing, the original artist he is.

Apparently Mr. Homer's vision in the matter of the fine arts is extremely circumscribed; but what he does see he sees with great vigor. He is like near-sighted people who are said to be better observers within the restrictions placed by their vision than other people within their wider horizons. He was almost forty before it occurred to him that a woman's legs might be indicated under and through a dress in an artistic manner without violation of decency. That idea seemed to come upon him like a thunderclap. It bore fruit at once and ever since the women in his pictures have been provided with something to stand and walk upon. A deliciously American trait, this, when we know that about us are quantities of "ladies" who think something derogatory is meant if they are called "women," and still greater hordes whose modesty is shocked by the mention of "legs." They go to the opera and the "Black Crook"; they read impossible French novels; but woe betide the man who mentions legs! Of this national hypocrisy Mr. Homer has been at once the victim and the naïf exponent; he was in early years discouraged from a pro-

found study of the nude and discovered on entering the work of his life that our public, without being in any way more moral than that of other lands, was ten times more squeamish and Pharisaical. Under these oppressions he struggled and groped his way, living in the University of the City the haggard life of an artist who is appreciated by few and consistently patronized by none; migrating thence to the studio building in West Tenth street and living there in a better atmosphere of comradeship but scarcely in more comfort than in his rude tower overlooking Washington Square.

Homer D. Martin, John La Farge, Eastman Johnson, William Page, were his special cronies at this period, concerning whom it may be remarked that none of them seemed to impress his artistic individuality on Homer's work. Thus from Messrs. La Farge and Martin he might have learned softness and richness of color, subtlety, or the use of landscape to express what is inexpressible by other means—unless it be music. William Page did not inoculate him with his ideas of the Titianic method, nor did Eastman Johnson impart to him the way to make outlines of figures melt into the background. So it has always been with Winslow Homer. The dull routine of the Academy schools did not dishearten him as a pupil; but neither did Paris turn his head with the supreme cleverness of her masters of technique. The writer owns a painting by Mr. Homer, made or at least finished at Paris in 1867 or 1868, which has the same quaint individuality, the same virtues, the same defects that one sees in paintings from his hand before and after that visit. The brutal indifference of picture buyers to all that was fresh and original in his paintings did not absolutely discourage him, although there were times and seasons when he announced to his friends with great bitterness and the utmost solemnity that he proposed to abandon art for business. Indeed there was one period when Mr. Homer did retire from active work and sulk in some far-off tent. Doubtless the rest from the disheartening struggle so gained was ultimately of benefit to him in more senses than one.

Whilst Winslow Homer was a known name as far back as the years of reconstruction after the civil war, it was not till the artist began to make water-color sketches that he was greeted by any wide fame. With him the color sense was not keen and strong enough to overcome the difficulties of oils; neither did his drawing admit of an easy and masterly management of figures in the composition. The water-color sketch met exactly that leaning toward a vivid but narrow view of things which is his characteristic. He began, oddly enough, to be an impressionist in water colors—but how different an impressionist from those we are used to consider such! One phase of this period was devoted to painting rather elaborately a single figure, such as a girl reclining in a hammock, and reducing all the surroundings to a shadowy array of nothings, with the object of holding the observer to the figure by as nearly as possible leaving out everything else. Finding a sale for his water colors, he followed up the success with all his might, and for a series of years his contributions were the most important of any for quality and quantity at the exhibitions devoted to that branch. The reason was that he felt powerfully some central fact, like the way a creek looks when it shines as burnished copper under a slanting sun and a swimming boy breaks the brilliant sheet with his heel; this fact he placed no less strongly on paper; so that a connoisseur, while he might say to himself that a thousand other men could have done the thing more cleverly, recognized that to conceive it was a stroke of genius, and to fix it, though it might be harshly, was the work of a true artist. An exhibition without some trenchant and perhaps irritating picture by Winslow Homer was no exhibition at all. Men who felt most keenly on art

matters, because themselves artists having temperaments, early education and ideals completely different, were forced to acknowledge the originality of this stubborn fighter in the struggle for existence in New York.

Of late years Mr. Homer has traveled more and worked at better advantage. He was in Wales and England for a year or so, making sketches and finished pictures which betrayed an earnest appreciation of the local scenery and populace, but never a trace of certain English and Welsh art influences such as those emanating from Millais and Burne-Jones. Later he visited the Bermudas and Cuba, sending to the exhibitions many pictures which made a sensation from their novel subjects. It was the same thing, however; colors are more vivid; pure colors are applied with the old directness but a greater contrast to suit the marine tropics; but there is the awkwardness that may be one factor in the peculiar fascination of his work. Above all things there is no smartness—and heaven knows how wearisome American smartness unsupported by depth of feeling often gets! Not long ago an oil painting, The Life-Line, created no little sensation for its boldness and solid story-telling quality. It was a life-saver carrying a young woman through the surf from a wreck by a tackle running on a life-line to the beach. Still more recent is Taking an Observation, a painting full of rugged truth to nature and moist with the wet breath of the sea.

Mr. Homer has practically deserted New York for the present, having retired to a lonely studio-cabin on the New England coast, where Boston, rather than New York, is his nearest market; Boston, which ignored and neglected him until he had won again and again fame in the city Boston affects to despise—Boston, his native town. Here he finished another marine which surpasses in drawing, if not in color, and certainly in dramatic effect, The Life-Line. Some bathers overcome by the undertow are being brought in through the surf, and a tragedy only too common at the summer resorts along the Atlantic seaboard, terrible in reality, has been made more real by his genius.

It would be a long list to number his pictures in oils and water colors worthy of mention, from Zouaves Pitching Quoits of the war period to Snap the Whip and other scenes of simple rustic school life shown at the Centennial; from pictures taken in the Southern States like Cotton Pickers and Visit from the Ole Missus, in which he set the fashion of painting the neglected negro, to Shark Fisherman, a water color, in which he showed in brilliant colors a struggle between a black Hercules in a boat and a man-eater of the Antilles. Lists of names of pictures are dry reading and leave no remembrance behind. The fact that I want to impress is that in Winslow Homer we have one, and a chief among them, of a band of native painters who are not "eclectic" in any sense deserving a sneer, but represent the United States in genius as well as limitations. He is an outgrowth of our imperfect art schools, our tremendous war full of humiliations and mistakes, of the stupidity of our picture buyers and the encouragement of the few who can see genius under superficial faults. The slowness of his development has its good side, for it has kept him from early success and made him continue till his fiftieth year to grope after artistic wisdom instead of sinking into the complacency of an easy mannerism. His harsh envelope has a kernel of meat which is sweet to the genuine lover of art.

Charles de Kay.

J. Wagner &c

HARRY EATON, PINX.

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Along the Pond

An American Sculptor

IF a biography of the sculptor Warner were to be written, its starting-point would be a question to be answered only by a student of heredity, and imperfectly even then. Through what freak of atavism or what special influence was it that New England brought forth natures so dissimilar from their environments as those of Olin L. Warner and George Fuller? The latter was born with a feeling for charm and beauty of color which, despite limitations of time and circumstances, is like a vague memory of the great Venetian colorists. And the former was born a Greek. One can understand the emotional, impressionable temperament in Mr. St. Gaudens, a Keltic type. All the sterner virtues, all heroic qualities may be derived from Puritan stock. But it is a curious thing to find an outgrowth of such pure art feeling as is found in Warner with antecedents and environments so unfavorable. What would have become of his birthright of simple enjoyment of life, grace of action, movement and play of supple muscle, a sensuousness combined with larger purpose, in the New England of Cotton Mather, or indeed in that of Jonathan Edwards?

Nevertheless the influence of New England asserted itself. Twenty-five years ago, as a group of boys stood talking by a school-room window, one of them rudely carved from chalk a head of Lincoln—the subject of their talk. But when the others praised the head Warner crushed it under his foot, realizing that his work was not good and that he could do better. This is a fine touch of New England conscientiousness and "high aspiration," but the incident was characteristic of the individual, like his course when choosing his profession. He had tested himself by making a bust in plaster, the naïve standard being a likeness. And when, in such manner as he knew, he had proved his fitness, it seemed to him that such serious work as sculpture must be entered upon rightly, under the very best influences and guidance, for which it was necessary to go abroad. And so he resolutely put art behind him, learned a business, and worked faithfully at

it until, after some years had passed, he had earned the means of foreign study. I think this worth noting, not merely because of the courage and respect for art thus shown, but because many Americans have done the easier thing and suffered harm. They have begun in fourth-rate studios at home, thinking art a trade to be learned easily and cheaply and to be made profitable as soon as possible. And they have acquired a certain bent of which they have never entirely rid themselves. I speak of the men of Mr. Warner's youth, of course. Within ten years American art schools have gained significance, and now modeling is well taught. But it was in 1869 that Mr. Warner, preserved by his own sane instincts from the commercialism of American stone-yards and the unripe teachings of native "sculptors," sailed for Europe, free at last to begin his education in art.

Reading of these earlier experiences in a sketch of Mr. Warner which has fallen in my way, they seem to indicate a natural feeling for beauty, or at least value of form, and a very high and serious conception of the mission of the artist, to use a phrase much cheapened by flippant use. The *Beaux Arts* and Jouffroy's studio offered a test very different from that of the plaster bust carved in a Vermont barn, but it appears that the young sculptor proved the rightfulness of his choice. Others have testified to the distinction of his career at the *Beaux Arts*, relating that he was invited by Carpeaux to enter his studio and remain with him, "the first honor of the kind ever paid to an American sculptor, and the highest honor that a great artist can pay to a student." This was after certain experiences during the siege of Paris and reign of the Commune, which perhaps can be imagined by readers of ex-Minister Washburne's published diary. Mr. Warner declined Carpeaux's invitation. The writer whom I have quoted says, "he astonished his friends by telling them that he intended to return to his own country, and that he believed it would encourage deserving men." Many a steamer has brought similar hopes and ambitions up New York Bay. Mr. Warner, like others, learned that America is not France. Instead of a "paternal" care of art he found indifference; instead of discrimination, ignorance. He must have seen a few Government commissions awarded, but through the influence of lobbyists, politicians, or social intrigues. He found sculptors who were stone-cutters, and sculptors whose "art" consisted of slight mechanical skill and a slender knowledge of conventional arrangement and decorative effect. He could not join these men in hunting commissions through clubs and drawing-rooms, and in pulling wires which led to Wall street, Washington and the offices of the newspapers. Perhaps it is worth while to cite a writer upon art who said not long since: "I have known Mr. Warner for eight years and in all that time he has never been the first to speak of his work, he has never even remotely suggested that it be mentioned, he has never invited me to a private view held by himself, and all that I have seen of his work has really been in spite of him rather than through him." Theoretically nothing can be more admirable than the dignity of an artist so self-respecting as to insist that his work alone shall speak for him without the slightest effort by himself. George Fuller was such a man, and Fuller rather than lower himself laid his brushes away, and buried himself upon a New England farm for sixteen years. It is not hard to imagine the earlier experiences of an artist of Mr. Warner's character in New York, and yet all that is known of him proves that he has adhered to his rugged independence, a quality as rare as it is precious. Perhaps the times have changed since his arrival. There are more clever workmen now than then, the *Beaux Arts* has sent out more Americans, and more passable work is being done in sculpture, even though there is little which has the elements of permanent vitality. Yet

now as then, public commissions go by favor, and the tricky modeling of self-confident *débutants*, like the inane conventions of the veterans, is accepted as exemplifying serious sculpture. If there has been some gain, as I believe there has, the condition of twelve years ago must have been very bad indeed. It is not strange that Mr. Warner waited for recognition like many another sincere and modest artist before him.

Mr. Warner's earlier work included a figure modeled in Paris, a colossal medallion portrait of Edwin Forrest, and a bust of R. B. Hayes, modeled in 1876. In comparison with what was being done about him, this work was good; indeed, the force of the Forrest medallion gives it a permanent value. The figure, which represented "May," was not what he would have designed in later years. No artist "finds himself" at once on emerging from the schools. Consciously or unconsciously he has borrowed and assimilated more or less according to the strength of his individuality, and a period of experimenting, of groping here and there, intervenes before the period of personal advance or retrogression. Yet Mr. Warner's personality was too vigorous ever to be over-ridden, and almost from the first his individuality asserted itself in a series of small busts and medallions. His sketch of an "Indian Slaying a Panther" was racy of the soil, but the essay in this direction was never followed out. Had it been, we might have had an American sculptor who could model animals independently of Barye's influence. But Mr. Warner made a higher choice, and this sketch, I think, was never publicly exhibited.

His introduction to the New York public was at a time of agitation. The old order was challenged, and the influence of the men lately from Paris and Munich was on the increase. When these young apostles of light and liberty joined hands in union Mr. Warner was early enlisted. He was one of the first five members of the Society of American Artists, an organization which for several years abundantly justified its existence. There was a new movement in painting, and Warner and St. Gaudens introduced a new spirit into sculpture. Those who had patiently waited for some artistic development in our sculpture recognized a new touch in Mr. Warner's early work in his busts of Wolcott and Newell and his clean cut, brilliantly expressive medallions, but the quality of his style was shown in his bust of Mr. Cottier better, it seems to me, than in anything which had preceded it. This might well have been called an antique, but it was not at all the kind of antique sometimes the resultant of academic influences. There was the truth of likeness, which in popular opinion seems to be the end of sculpture. But the artist, instead of ending with mere reproduction, used his subject as a medium for the expression of his art. With the truth there was a certain ideality, the impress of the artist's thought, and a feeling for charm and richness of style. "Call this cheerful little bust a head of Esculapius or the Indian Bacchus, and say it was dug upon Greek ground, and we should all be eager for casts of it," wrote one visitor to the exhibition of 1878, and the quotation shows that there were those at that time who found in the young sculptor's work something of the Greek love of beauty, and certain qualities of universal interest which had not been often found in American portrait busts.

If the little Cottier bust was upon the whole the most delightful demonstration of the sculptor's artistic individuality and ample technical knowledge which he had then exhibited, it was nevertheless only the precursor of work much more important. Mr. Warner's work has consisted of monumental sculpture, of ideal figures and of portraiture. What this work proved, even in the earlier years of its appearance, was its entirely sculpturesque quality. Take *bas-relief* in which delicacy so often becomes vagueness, and truth of form is lost in exaggerated light and shade and

over-refined subtlety of receding planes, and characterization is subordinated to picturesqueness. Mr. Warner's medallions never have shown a borrowing of the painter's effects. Their refinement has never been attained at the expense of simplicity and strength. They have been largely designed, comprising much in little, firmly executed, but with a keen sensitiveness to beauty, and always true to the sculptor's medium. That the artist possessed a depth of sentiment, perhaps until then unknown to most of us, was shown in his "Twilight," a slender, graceful figure, the arms raised, the hands drawing down the veil of night over a fair, pensive face. This was poetry of twilight in very charming form. Technically, there was a felicity in the arrangement of draperies and skill in modeling which were rare enough in our exhibitions in 1879.

It was in the next year that Mr. Warner exhibited a bust due to the *camaraderie* of the studios and done for pure love of art. His bust of Mr. J. Alden Weir, like his bust of Miss Maud Morgan shown a year later, is among the successes of the exhibitions which are still remembered. It was a new thing to come upon a portrait bust which was so much more than a portrait, and yet the bust of Weir was only the larger expression of qualities existent in the bust of Cottier. It was a full-blooded, alert, manly man whom Warner pictured in this bust—one who might have sat for a type; and yet the individual likeness was not lost. There was the Greek tendency toward the type or ideal, and there was simplicity. The spirited pose, vigorous modeling of muscles and features and movement of the eyes imparted an animation which might not have accorded with "classic repose"; and yet the intense virility of the bust was never aggressive. The bust of Miss Maud Morgan might almost pass for pure classical art of a severer time. It was equal to the bust of Weir in sculpturesque feeling and fitness, as strong but in a very different way, its strength lying not in intense life and hardly suppressed energy, but in the expression of calm grace and dignity and of noble simplicity. Both busts lacked the accessories to which modern Italy especially has accustomed a much-suffering public. All that there was of beauty and interest was derived from the sculptor's treatment of the subject proper. And to this treatment only, not to draperies or gewgaws or wreathed pedestals, was due the sincerely artistic atmosphere of these two busts. It is pleasant to recall the recognition of abiding value which was implied in the purchase of the bust of Miss Morgan for the Boston Art Museum and the enthusiastic reception of the bust of Weir in Paris.

These references to classic style are easily misunderstood, for the term is vague; it has sheltered a multitude of conventionalities, and moreover, if seemingly applied too literally, the rash maker of such comparisons is brought to confusion. Perhaps more is lost than gained by hunting over the history of sculpture in attempted classifications. Moreover, if Mr. Warner's sculpture recalls the Greek, his subjects are Americans, and his manner of working modern. What is to be insisted upon is the art feeling and simplicity of his work and also a sensitiveness to beauty of form so charmingly shown in his "Cupid and Psyche," "Dancing Nymph," and in his "Diana," his last and best realization of an ideal. The "Dancing Nymph," exhibited in 1881 together with the bust of Miss Morgan, was the frank expression of a love for the beautiful lines of the human figure. He pictured the nymph just springing into the dance in an ecstasy of innocent delight. There was no lack of high endeavor in a task like this, the modeling of a nude figure full of latent action, without a particle of relief from draperies or accessories. Technically the work was a remarkable exhibition of accuracy and knowledge, but its universal charm lay in its grace and loveliness. And yet it may be questioned whether for sustained grace the "Nymph" was equal to the

THOS. HOVENDEN PINX.

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relief of "Cupid and Psyche," exhibited in 1882. The name signifies little, for the subject simply represented a nymph bending, while her lithe body formed a charming arch, to caress the little God of Love. The sensuousness of all this work is entirely healthy, as wholesome as enjoyment of the sunshine after rain, of the fragrant breath of the forests after the confusion of city streets. It has seemed a joy to the sculptor to relieve his portraiture by essaying to interpret the beauties of the nude, to which he has brought not merely intimate anatomical knowledge and a masterly skill in modeling, but the higher essentials of artistic vision, imagination, and largeness of design. This ideal work has steadily shown improvement. The elastic curving body of the Psyche and the dimpled roguish Cupid were treated with no less truth and precision, and with more lightness and charm throughout, than the three or four preceding ideal figures. And then for a time the pressure of other engagements caused an interruption of ideal work.

Yet it was not until 1882 that Mr. Warner received his first commission for a statue. He had proved his powers and his versatility in portrait busts and medallions, in studies of the nude and in some admirable architectural sculpture, some terra-cotta heads for the building of the Long Island Historical Society. When his native State, Connecticut, at last gave him recognition by awarding the commission for a statue of Governor Buckingham, Mr. Warner was equal to the more complex problems of the work. He entered upon the new responsibilities seriously as always, taking his art in earnest. He made one of those *Wander-lehre* abroad, of which the conscientious artist who wishes to refresh his brain and correct his eye so often finds himself in need. He mastered the character of his subject, the War Governor of the State, a man of resolution and action, as well as a thinker, a man of affairs as well as a statesman. Then came questions of composition and treatment of planes, questions more difficult in the case of a seated than a standing figure. When the statue was done, it was worthy of the sculptor. It had true monumental character, for its distinguishing qualities were simplicity, largeness and truth of composition, dignity and repose. It expressed the character of the subject in the suggestions of reserve force and latent energy as well as of mental power, and when Connecticut celebrated the unveiling of this statue in the Hartford Capitol, the State received a public monument deserving the often misplaced title of a work of art. Unfortunately the statue is placed in a hall where it is badly lighted, but its merit cannot be disguised.

The success of the Buckingham statue encouraged fastidious Boston to award to Mr. Warner a commission for a statue of William Lloyd Garrison. As he comprehended his subject, that subject was pre-eminently an intellectual man, but also a man of determination and iron will, of resolute convictions and courage to maintain them, a writer, but a writer who wielded his pen like a sword. Such general characteristics the sculptor endeavored to express, but softened by the more genial influence of a peaceful old age. Here as before, and even more clearly, the artist showed his understanding of the laws of composition, and the balancing, opposition, readjustment and arrangement, which go to round out the character of monumental sculpture. For the sculptor must keep before him the relations of the large planes of his figure, and these imaginary surfaces are to be correlated and contrasted until they furnish variety and movement as well as harmony. There are, too, the little deceptions which sculptors, from Phidias down, have used to produce the right effect upon the eye. All this is familiar, but since these difficulties are greater in a seated statue, it is worth while to suggest them in recalling the successful composition and arrangement of the Garrison statue. The introduction of some details to relieve the space between the chair legs

was perhaps open to criticism. If I have not sought to pick flaws in the work instanced here, it is not that it is held up as perfect. But Mr. Warner has done work so much better in certain ways than any we have had that it would be unjust in this mere sketch to lay stress upon shortcomings. The Garrison statue is a noble memorial. It shows the same progressive development which appeared in the artist's ideal figures, and this to those who follow American sculpture is not its least satisfactory feature.

Little that has not been said is to be learned from the artist's later busts. There was his bust of Miss Cottier, light and dainty of touch, suggestive of sportive fancy; his bust of Mr. A. A. Low, a straightforward presentment of the weighty man of business; a bust of Mr. Brownell, an intellectual type; and a bust of a lady, yet unfinished, which seems to me as beautiful a presentation of a modern type as Miss Morgan's was of a classic. But what concerns us at present is that the sculptor's love of the ideal, and his feeling for the beauty of the nude, have again found expression. It was only through a chance discovery that the *Art Review* was enabled to reproduce to some extent the figure of "Diana" upon which Mr. Warner has been silently working for nearly two years. In treating this subject, the artist has chosen, as once or twice before, the instant just before suggested action takes form. The goddess is alert, ready to spring to her feet, but her attitude is one of repose in the larger meaning of the word, and her calm dignity is unruffled. The weight of the body rests firmly on the ground, and while the partly supporting left arm hints at tension, there is no more feeling of strain than of agitation in the figure. The idealized face is very noble and there is imaginative quality here, and a rare form of beauty. The intelligence and subtlety of the modeling appear to me beyond all praise. The fine hints of muscular tension and relaxation, the wonderfully delicate and faithful modeling of the arching back, and the color and movement of the torso, front and back are most creditable achievements. Nothing is done to catch the eye, there is no trick of effect. It is the loveliness of Diana's elastic virginal form that we are to see, and not a clever stage setting of accessories. This is Greek sculpture, it may be said, and yet the artist's manner in his arrangement, modeling and color, is the manner of our time.

The "Diana" embodies certain vital qualities of Mr. Warner's art which I have tried to emphasize in these notes. This figure, like his medallions, shows that sculpture was his natural and inevitable medium of expression. His preference is for design over *chiaroscuro*, for quality of form over pictorial effect. No one would apply to this figure the hackneyed phrase picturesque. Moreover, its unconsciousness, perfect simplicity, reserve, purity of line and almost severe beauty have nothing in common with the affected pseudo classicism which was begotten by Canova. The quality of structural truth is remarkable here as in other examples of the artist, and this is worth noting, for the claims of construction, of truth of weight and action are too often disregarded in our public statues. It will be felt, I think, that the "Diana" illustrates a large style, animation, delicacy, and also a virility of manner which have hardly been so well combined in anything else that the artist has done. And if we accept the motto drawn by Mr. Walters from Barye's life, the keen observation and study which have preceded the "Diana" show again that "Genius is Labor." It is discreditable that we have no Luxembourg in which work like this might be preserved.

Ripley Hitchcock.

River, Central Park

An American Illustrator

IT is not long since the illustrating of books and magazines was considered beneath the dignity of a painter who could employ himself in color; and when we look through the average picture-book of twenty or even a less number of years ago, we can hardly blame the artists of that time for wishing to stay out of such company as they would therein have encountered. Poor drawing, indifferent relation to text, cheap and "shoppy" engraving, were reasonable excuses for this reserve, for rank Bohemianism seems to have enjoyed a monopoly of illustrative commissions at the period of which we are speaking. But all that has been changed. There are not many painters of to-day, I fancy, who do not regard it as an honor to have their work accepted for *Harper's*, *The Century*, or the luxurious volumes that issue from the press as the Christmas holidays draw near. The framing that their pictures receive is not in gold or bronze, to be sure, but it suffices; and while they do not find place on the walls of a National Academy, they are taken into the homes of appreciative people in all English-speaking countries—and that is better.

Among the artists who have become prominently identified in the public mind with illustrative work is William Hamilton Gibson. Mr. Gibson was equipped, at his debut as an illustrator, with a good and self-acquired technique, he was a ready draughtsman on the block, he had exceptional knowledge of plant-growth, and bird and insect life, and he had persistence and enthusiasm. It is told that his brother once fell into argument with Henry Ward Beecher, who soon backed out of the discussion in spite of strong opposition to the views of his adversary, saying: "You can't expect me to convince a man who has a chin like that." The firmness that Mr. Beecher detected in the face of his controversialist is evidently a family trait, for one sees it in the features and in the conduct of the subject of this sketch. Will has gained knowledge, and will is using it; will has held him to his tasks, and is forcing a favorable result to them.

A book of drawings for students was one of the artist's first ventures. Most of the subjects were flowers, and some of the original drafts for this book were in the recent sale of Mr. Gibson's work at a New York art gallery, where they attracted notice by their freedom of line, economic simplicity of treatment and charm of composition. His correctness was surprising, but from the first he never permitted in his work any slighting of truth for the sake of effect. This certainty of eye and hand were soon of practical benefit to him. The Appletons were about to publish a book on American Artists, but there was trouble over the illustrations. The process of photographing a picture directly on the block had not then come into use; consequently, every picture to be copied had first to be drawn in reverse on the box-wood. But more was necessary than a mathematically accurate copy; to be of artistic value, the picture needed some savor of the style of the man who painted it. A "machine draughtsman" would have given his own version of every picture he undertook to reproduce. Mr. Gibson was employed upon this task, and he not only endeavored to make close copies of his exemplars, but sought to impart, through his own drawing, a notion of their technique and personal quality. Therefore, it came about that, subject apart, the Inness, the Church, the McEntee, the Gifford and the Martin were not to be confused with one another when they came together in a uniform dress of black and white.

But Mr. Gibson was capable of better things, and the call to speak his thought grew louder, constantly. Had not the literary faculty been born in him, and had he not found its exercise almost as urgent and enjoyable as that of his art, his public appearance might have been some years delayed. He wrote a book on boys' sports and hunting and trapping that he illustrated himself, and presently there began to appear in *Harper's* some papers and drawings of his, indicative of poetry in rural life and expository of the thousand beauties that lie about us half seen or unregarded. The writing was simple, direct and manly, shrewd in argument and observation, retentive of Yankee dialect, quiet and pleasant in humor and sentiment, and showing a healthful joy in open air, in woods and fields. It has been likened to that of Thoreau—an author who has influenced him,—but it has a genial quality that is absent from the philosophy of the Walden hermit. The illustrations for these papers were a pleasing novelty. They showed us nature in detail, and revealed great treasure in small things. We had waded through grass and grain and snow, we had kicked aside fallen leaves, we had trampled daisies and buttercups and seen them not, and had merely glanced at the insect or bird darting across our path. Comes this interpreter of nature from his brooksides and pastures, and piercing our dull thoughts with a flash of inspiration that lightens our surroundings also, reads high messages in trees and stones, finds hint of elfland in the wing of a moth or dragon-fly, transcends expression in a twilight, and out of common roadside-weeds brings blossoms that might gem the fields of Paradise.

What can be more delicate than his hammock of spider-web swung from stalk to stalk of grass and clover and sprinkled with dew, each flat and spreading drop edged with a ray of crystal morning light? What more tonic than his White Mountain pictures, with noble peaks shining in the low sun of afternoon? What more inviting to a lover of solitude and reflection than those dim forest arches floored and canopied with snow, its silver crust barred with shadows? White peace broods over orchards, hillsides and hamlets nestling in green depths. We almost hear the brook's cool bubbling as it slips through its alley of alders, and the wind's breath when bushes sway in the clearing and cloud-curtains fold across the western heaven. The sleepy quiet of New England villages is felt in the long, elm-bor-

C. D. Weldon Pinx. Photogravure N.Y.

Arthur Parton Print

dered street,—a quiet broken only by the peddler's wagon lumbering into town. You feel an eerie influence in the "Haunted House" and lonely cypress swamps, and his "Twilight Voice" is faint with mystery. How thin and soluble are his morning mists, and how jocund his summer sunbeams! Even his back-yard in a big city is become a revelation of graces, though there be nothing in it but weeds and wild flowers, the aftermath of a harvest reaped from meadows that were bricked and flagged over years ago. Occasionally, though his forte is not the figure, he gives us a quaint character met in his travels, or recalled from the days when he was a scholar in "The Gunnery" or a student in that larger academy of the hills:—some big-booted, whittling farmer; some witch-like "Huldy" stealing through a wood at night to gather herbs that no one else might find; some sly Ethan fishing at a trout-hole known only to himself; or, perhaps, the buxom colored-woman who responded to his kindly but familiar salutation, "Aunty!" "Do n' you 'aunty' me, young man. Fo' de Lawd, I hopes I do n't favor you."

His drawings are produced by any and all methods customary among illustrators, but there is an advantage that he enjoys in common with but few of his craft—that of drawing directly on the wood. The result is, that when he receives his proof from the engraver (and probably no illustrator in the country is so inexorable as to the proper execution of his work), every dot and line and shade and tone is reviewed and the block is elaborated, securing in the final engraving some of the most wonderful displays of technique and effect.

Mr. Gibson is less known as an artist in color than as a draughtsman, yet frequenters of the water color displays in New York have encountered his pictures there and have enjoyed them for their simplicity of subject, their delicacy of color, the bright, transparent quality of some, the sentiment and pathos of others. They are suggestive of his drawings in topic and somewhat in treatment, for there is in both the same correctness and freedom, realization and suggestion, and unusual efficacy of ærial perspective. The Berkshire Hills of Western Massachusetts and Connecticut, amid which he was born, "raised," and where he still abides in summer, have furnished a majority of his themes. In variety of landscape, in diversity of atmospheres and seasons, they are practically inexhaustible; he loves them, and they yield their treasure to him. The stony, weedy pasture, the apple trees plumed with blossoms, the pool where a brook sleeps in the boscage, the road dappled with sun and shadow, the placid upland with a glint of water and a lift of roofs and spires across the valley, the forest path with golden lights breaking the emerald arch above, the autumn glories of oak and maple, and the tangle of briary hillsides, are subjects that he paints and returns to with cheerful enthusiasm. But he has a feeling, likewise, for another mood that is expressed in views of November woods, with sere leaves spread upon the earth and mists reeking from pools and hollows; twilights where an evening of rain is closing in and black clouds rush across the sky; days when distant heights are leaden and barely discernible through an atmosphere filled with vapor; nights when moonlight rests on the mountains, and fierce winds range across them, whirling the snow into wreaths and tossing the skeleton arms of trees in angry gesture. Yet he is seldom so sad as to be melancholy or morbid. In pictures that seem to lower and threaten, we often feel the stir of fresh and wholesome air and scent the spicy fragrance of fallen leaves. If we are not too confirmed in city habit, we shall breathe freer for the space and solitude that they open to us.

Smoke is a pigment that Mr. Gibson is using with notable results. He has given it a thorough

test and made surprising discoveries. Some people have confounded his smoke pictures with those decorative or grotesque designs that talented mechanics and village physicians used to burn on the surfaces of pine boards with hot pokers, and that are occasionally seen, with other dreadful things, in the art departments of country fairs, or in the funereal best parlors of rural aristocracy. They have nearly the effect of sepia painting, but the gradations of tone are easier than in water color, and some effects of cloud, mist, rain, sunset, shadow and distance are rendered not only with a power, but with a tenderness, that it would not be easy to simulate in other processes. These pictures are "painted" on heavy paper with a flame. Sounds odd, does it not? The paper is tacked to a board, placed upright on an easel, and the artist stands before it with a rubber tube in hand that terminates in a metal point, and at the other end is connected with gas fixtures overhead. The gas is lighted at the tip, and the flame applied to the paper as briskly as whitewash to a wall. It has to be, or the paper catches fire. Moved from side to side across its lower part, it leaves a brown band that grades into the white above it with an expression of immeasurable remove. Dash in a few clouds with a whirl of this "brush;" accentuate the foreground here and there to convey the impression of rocks and hollows; put the flame near and let it play upward for a second, and you have a poplar, a pine or distant streamers of rain or snow; with the finger wipe an irregular track through the lower part of the picture, and you have a road; scratch a horizontal line or two with a knife, and you have water. Now stand back a few paces and study your twilight. Observe especially the value of that gradation from dark to light, and say if you have not seen exactly that effect on the plains of Colorado. Mr. Gibson has used one or two of these smoke pictures for illustrating some recent papers in *Harper's* on the South, and he has exhibited some larger ones on both sides of the Atlantic. The "Mountain Gloom" in his late exhibition is equal to anything by Doré; a dark and misty tarn surrounded by huge masses of fallen rock, a mighty crag of granite beyond, with curls whirling up along its face, and through a rift in these vapors the head of a mountain peering from the sky. Like any other medium, smoke must be used with knowledge and discretion, or the results are ridiculous. It must also be employed with care, for I have heard of painful consequences to the whiskers and eyebrows of gentlemen who have absently thrust the flaming tubes over their ears, or held them in their teeth while considering their pictures.

Mr. Gibson is of medium height, his face is animated and cheerful, his eyes large and observant. His taste in music and literature is cultivated, as in art; he is an entertaining talker, for his studies have been diverse and thorough, and he knows as much about botany, bugs and bucolic belongings as he does about paint and ink. He is an officer of the Author's Club of New York, having earned recognition through his magazine articles and books, of which latter "Pastoral Days," "Highways and Byways" and "Happy Hunting Grounds" have appeared in sumptuous form, and have enjoyed wide popularity. In art he has had no teachers but nature and instinct, but in art, as in other vocations, knowledge that is self-acquired serves us best and longest.

Charles M. Skinner.

L. Guy Pinx

Stained Glass Windows

THE development of stained glass on this side of the Atlantic has been so sudden and so recent that the general public can hardly be said to know of its existence. Ordinary congregations, for example, when they consider the decoration of their houses of worship; ordinary people, when they desire to place a memorial window in a church, think first of English, French, Belgian or German glass, because the merits of the American have not had the time to move the stagnant waters of popular neglect. It is also true that among those who pay attention to what is going on at home are some who have been disgusted. Stained glass of superior quality has been made here during the past ten years, but during that period there has been a "boom" which caused all sorts of incompetent, ill-provided persons to rush in and fill the market with bad wares; there has been a reaction, and there is now a more healthful tendency, the men of brains having survived in the struggle, whilst the ignorant went to the wall.

Grace Church, New York, contains windows that register various episodes in the demand for stained glass. In the clere-story and nave are windows by Booth, a New York maker who followed English precedents and imported English glass. Then there is some French glass in the north transept, glaring and flat in tints, whilst the rose window over the entrance is filled with most garish, melodramatic glass belonging to a comparatively remote epoch. The great window in the apse is by Messrs. Clayton and Bell of London and so are many of the windows on that side of the church. The Booth windows will probably be removed and replaced by the work of this London firm. As you enter the church, the third and fourth windows to right and left are distinctly English of a later type, showing the influence of Burne-Jones and Rossetti in drawing and coloration. They are by Holliday who worked with Clayton and Bell. There is no glass by William Morris in Grace Church, but Boston has a window by him in Trinity Church, and his glass is found in some private houses at Newport, R. I. Mr. Morris usually follows designs by Burne-

Jones. As to French glass of the better sort M. Oudinot has placed some in Boston; a great deal of an inferior kind from France and Belgium will be found in Roman Catholic churches throughout the United States and Canada.

So far the foreign glass has proved extremely unsatisfactory when comparison is made with American work. A walk through Grace Church is enough to establish this curious fact. The windows by Clayton and Bell are feeble in design and weak in color; those by Holliday are better in color but not remarkable, whilst extremely mannered in design. The English artists try to emulate the old glass-window makers, and in so doing repeat their mistakes—unimportant when compared with their fine points and in themselves pleasantly quaint—but absurd when introduced into modern work. Thus Holliday's red-haired Joseph and sentimental weak-faced Pharaoh are quite intolerable. The French glass is very light in tones and inclined to gaudiness; all the best talent of France appears to go into sculpture and oil painting. The secret of the inferiority of European glass is the ignorance of foreign glass-makers of the special characteristics of our climate. How can a London artist imagine the strength and permanence of the sunlight of our summers and clear winter weather? It is so powerful that tones which in Europe appear rich and sober take a gay, thin, flat look when placed in an American church. The secret is an open one now and some makers abroad strive to rectify it; but they cannot compete with the men on the ground, if the latter are artists to whom the sense of color is a natural possession.

Our stained glass windows have drawn for designs in water color upon a number of artists. Mention may be made of a handful only—Elihu Vedder, G. W. Maynard, F. D. Millet, E. H. Blashfield, Will H. Low, Robert Blum, John Dufais, Anne G. Morse, John Johnston. Many have tried their fortune at glass window composing, but those whom it is at present worth mentioning are Messrs. John La Farge, Louis C. Tiffany, Francis Lathrop, Frederick Crowninshield and Maitland Armstrong. The most elaborate windows made in the United States have been recently completed by Mr. John La Farge. That to commemorate Helen Angier Ames is not only of very great size but extremely rich in design, containing seven figures of angels, two symbolical figures, a sarcophagus, etc., and other glasswork, which has taxed to the utmost the powers of this master of color. The single figure windows in Trinity Church, Boston, the jewel-like window in the same church in memory of Mrs. Charles McKim, and the St. Paul in St. Paul's Church, Stockbridge, are too well known to need more than a mention. In private houses Mr. La Farge's great window on the staircase in the mansion of the late Wm. H. Vanderbilt and the glass in the Japanese room prepared for that departed magnate of railways are the most important; but to catalogue all that Mr. La Farge has produced for churches and houses of private citizens would not agree with the purposes of this article. Mr. Louis C. Tiffany is not so strong and original a colorist, but within certain limitations produces windows very sombre, very rich, very interesting in their effects upon the eye. His work would involve another list for which a special paper would be needed. Mr. Francis Lathrop has a large window in St. John's Church, Providence, R. I., containing two colossal figures and two angels, which was never shown in New York, and a composition of two figures in St. George's Church, Flushing, Long Island, besides a chancel window in Bethesda Chapel, Saratoga, treated in a very broad original way. The immense skylight in the barrel vault of the main corridor of the Equitable Building, on Broadway, New York, is his—a decorative scheme in thirty-five panels, covering two thousand square feet, quiet in color, but most elaborate and well conceived, which forms part of the general decoration of that

pillared hall, where his great mosaic of marbles and glass, representing vigilance and force protecting charity, a composition of three draped and two nude figures, fronts one on the arched wall over against the entrance. Mr. Lathrop has a fine sense of color and great robustness in the management of draperies, being very distinct in all respects from Messrs. La Farge and Tiffany. The work of Mr. Crowninshield is mainly at Boston, New Bedford and elsewhere in Massachusetts. As a colorist he has not made much impression, but he is learned in this art and that of mural decoration, and fills acceptably the position of teacher in connection with the Boston Museum of the Fine Arts. Mr. Armstrong has also done some excellent work, in which a tendency to the old treatment of figures is very plain.

Thus much is necessary to show to those who have their attention fixed on oil and water color painting, on etching and engraving, that the stained glass of the United States, whilst far from having reached its full development, is also very well beyond the experimental stage; it has gone from promise to fulfillment. What, now, are the differences between European and American work? What is there in our stained glass which has extorted from half a dozen European experts the greatest admiration, and, in more than one case, a confession than there is nothing so fine to be had on the other side of the Atlantic?

If you will examine the best European windows, you will notice that a large part of the shading of draperies is produced by painting on the glass, said painting being fixed in position by the application of heat. The results are for the moment not the best, but they are not even surely permanent. The firing is an uncertain factor; the enamel often scales off during the lapse of years, leaves bald places and changes the tone of the window when it does not make it absolutely unsightly. To remedy the light tone of English windows paint has been applied to the back of the glass and fixed in position by varnishes. This has been done in Grace Church; but the results are not satisfactory and must be even more wanting in permanence that colors fixed by heat.

Now artists and glassmakers in this country have experimented in the staining of glass until they have obtained what may be called "broken tints," that is to say, the oval slab in which the glass is cast shades over from a very dark to a very light variety of the same color. Having thus a very wide choice of glass, the artist can, for instance, render the lights and shades that produce the effect of folds in drapery by choosing a piece of glass in which the color fades from dark to light. Thus he avoids painting and firing the glass, giving not only permanence but a wonderfully rich effect to his picture. Again should he be unable, notwithstanding the inventions of the glassmen, to find a color deep enough in tone, he boldly sets glass on glass, plate on plate, technically called "platings," and gets the richest results by thickening the glass in spots. By certain secret means fine opalescent effects have been produced in glass. The use of this opalescent glass, greatly abused at first by workmen who had no natural instinct for the beautiful, has enabled artists to add wonderful tints and shifting glories to their work. As a wide generalization it may be said that native artists have attacked the formal, the conventional in stained glass windows and forced it to yield to the needs of the painter. Doubtless, practical glass-composers in Europe would object that the saddle-bars, the stone tracery and the leadings of windows are stiff and formal factors in the general effect of a stained glass window which can only be met in the old way, by rude designs and formal figures, so that the observer does not demand a picture a tall, but is content with the colors and the harsh designs that coincide with such interferences.

They would point to the decadence of stained glass in the eighteenth century when glass tried to vie with oil painting. But this very natural argument has not prevented American artists from attempting what other workmen have hesitated to try. Doubtless, the European makers think the American on the wrong track, but the public, so far as we can say that the public patronizes or influences art of this kind, has not shown itself unwilling or inappreciative. It is fair to say that our best glass avoids the awkwardness and bad perspective of the early men and the too pictorial tendency of the decadence.

What are called "split jewels" can be used by a master of color in a way that never obtained hitherto. The glass is cast in solid pieces and broken with a hammer. Then these fragments are set in lead and studded wherever great depth and changing brilliancy of colors are needed. Sheets of glass, thicker in one part than another, or wavy, or wrinkled, are carefully examined for greater or smaller portions adapted to the exigencies of the picture. The straight bars of iron that hold the leaded glass in the frame, and which prevent the frame-work from yielding laterally and the heavy composite panes from bulging this way or that, are often treated with boldness. Where a straight bar might interfere with a figure it is forged in such a way as to change its course and conform to that part of the figure in which its presence is least felt. Thus it retains its usefulness, does its work, but avoids the harsh and disagreeable effect of a dark line bisecting a light part. Whilst the artists had at first to engage in much of the mechanical part of the work and waste their force in training glassmakers and workmen whose eye for color could be depended on, at present the tendency is to have window composer and glassmaker separate. Mr. John La Farge did much to train workmen in this art; Messrs. John Johnston, Roger Riordan and others are graduates of his shops. The Tiffany Glass Company still unites the glassmaker, designer and artist under one management.

By these and other means American artists have used the brilliant atmosphere of our climate to evoke from glass extraordinary colors and produce in churches deeper, richer, perhaps more religious effects than the mediæval glassmakers dreamed of. It is only fair to say that some of them have not only outstripped their competitors in Europe but beaten the old designers of the North of France and Flanders. The glass of the Middle Ages has, indeed, been reproduced exactly so far as its constituent parts are concerned. What the chemist has not been able to do is to reproduce the effects of time on the old glass that still smiles down, mellow and inexpressibly beautiful, from the rose windows of Chartres and the cathedral church of Rouen. Weathering produces on this old glass a peculiar pitted surface which must influence the tone to a large extent. The American workmen have approached this warm, soft effect of the old glass by the selection of colors from their stock of glass, but the results are not, as might be expected, similar to that of the painters in oils who try for the qualities of the old masters of painting. Between these and the glass-composers there is not a similarity but an analogy. Doubtless the old windows impressed them, fired them, set them thinking how to reach results of analogous kinds. But the impulse followed has not led them to a slavish imitation, rather to something new and valuable in the history of the fine arts.

Henry Eckford.

The Still Hunt

J. B. Bristol Pinx. Photogravure Co N.Y.

Lake Placid Adirondacks

[From the painting in the collection of Mr. Robbins Bartlett]

The Beauty of Paint

THE mind of the æsthetic world seems to be tolerably well made up to the belief that the highest and noblest beauty of art lies in the conception of the artist. If it has failed as yet to arrive at that conclusion, it is not for lack of arguments and theories logically advanced by an army of metaphysicians and critics. Perhaps the truth (for it may now be considered a truth) has been insisted upon too much. In establishing a lofty aim, in seeking for a transcendent beauty, it may be that we have disregarded and over-looked smaller aims and lowlier beauties. The star-gazer very often tramples under foot the violet, unconscious of the fact that in its petaled cell the flower may hold a mystery and a beauty less only by comparison to the shining light above it.

To prove a point one needs must be a kind of special pleader. To prove the higher aim of art, it has seemed necessary to denounce the commoner purpose of technical accomplishment. Not but what skill of hand is vitally important and beautiful in its way, but that it is not the *chief* and foremost purpose of art. The excepting clause has made but little impression. It has been so persistently reiterated (and I myself have added my quota of reiteration) that the work of the head is superior to the work of the hand, that people have come to think the latter of no consequence whatever. By the process of extreme inference to which humanity is unhappily given, the conclusion is reached that the fingers, not being so important as the brain, are, therefore, of no importance at all. Let us push aside theories for the nonce and frankly admit that there is a beauty in paint—pure paint and its handling,—and that, though it may not be the sublimity of noble design, it is nevertheless the beauty of perfect achievement.

Of those who patronize the gallery during the art season the father of the family goes to see something funny, the mother to see the pathetic "ideal," Miss Fanny looks for a romantic story on canvas, and Young Hopeful is carried away with a theatrical group of athletic models or a historical tragedy containing the moral sublime. But the art-learned connoisseur, the diligent amateur, the shoppy artist, and the carping critic—what do they go forth to see? Why, paint. At a

distance a clever idea, nice composition, drawing, color, or tone may attract their notice, and straightway they walk up to within smelling distance of the canvas, to see "if that man knows how to paint." Then begins the interesting part of the feast, for never a book-lover pored over a Stephens or a Baskerville with half the relish that a true lover of paint studies the manner in which an artist has handled his brush. Whether at Amsterdam or Venice among the ancients, or at Paris or Munich among the moderns, it is the same; the quest is for paint. The old picture-viewer is twin brother to the old book-worm. They hunt in similar fields in a similar manner. The one goes down the long rows of books sniffing at Shakespeare, Bacon and Pope, in favor of Albertus Magnus, John Pico and Poliziano; and the other goes down the gallery, passing over Ghirlandajo, Perugino, and Bartolommeo, to stand transfixed with enthusiasm before Rubens, Velasquez, or Watteau. And, after all, is there not some reason and method in the apparent eccentricity? Some may seek for the glories of the high ideal and some for the splendors of perfect skill. There are beauties in both, and the preference is a matter of taste.

The history of the technical side of painting has been divided into three general stages of development, corresponding to the rise, the maturity, and the decay of the art. The first stage is primitive and is marked by the predominance of line and form, the paint part of it being only a filling-in of the enclosed spaces with color. In this class may be included all the ancient work, the painting of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Early Christians, and even the Italians before Titian. All the great Florentines belong to it, for they placed their reliance upon line and never got much expression out of the brush. The outline was made first and the color added. With marvelous effect, surely, considering the materials used and the lack of technical knowledge regarding brush work; but nevertheless, as compared with latter-day painting, quite immature and inexpressive. It is the picture lover's greatest disappointment that the Florentines and Romans did not know how to put on paint like Rubens, Terborch, or even "little Brouwer." Andrea del Sarto was the best of them all, and with his handsome coloring and fresh treatment he managed to strike out a dashy, expressive style at times; but he was trammeled by the traditions of his age, and was no more than an infant in painting as compared with Titian. Leonardo never seemed to feel a spark of enthusiasm in his work. The "Mona Lisa" and the "Virgin of the Rocks" stand as the labor of years. With a carefulness that is almost painful to behold, he elaborated and worked over his pictures, producing as with a needle-pointed brush his really wonderful effects. The great Leonardo! he who was so bold and self-reliant in invention, had he only been a little more positive in execution, what art we might have seen! In looking at his pictures one keeps continually wishing he were not so faultily faultless, that he were not so icily regular. If he had only handled paint boldly, directly, enthusiastically, even had he sacrificed smooth beauty to expressive paint, as Michael Angelo dislocated arms and broke legs for the sake of expressive line, how much the paint-lover would have gained!

Raphael's brush was "dry," hard and unsympathetic at times, and gives little insight into the moods that prompted his work. His aim was usually attained with the composition and drawing of the picture, and the painting seemed but a filling-in process preceding a coat of varnish—something to be done with care, but not with much spirit. Admirable as is the general art of Raphael, his painting is suggestive of immaturity, his color is conventional, oftentimes conventionally bad, and his textures are often conspicuous by their absence. Michael Angelo said he was a sculptor and not a painter, and if we construe the word painter in a literal sense he spoke the truth. But

H. Hobart Nichols PINX.

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he was pre-eminently the greatest *artist* that ever lived. Correggio was not much of an improvement on the Florentines in point of brush-work, except that he produced atmosphere and shadows in such an effective manner that he dulled and blurred the hardness of line and made a nearer approach to nature possible. The wonder is that with his primitive manner of work, relying upon thin surfaces and transparent grounds, he, or any of the early Italians, managed to attain excellence at all. All honor to them! As artists they were the very greatest of earth and we do not seek to slur or criticise them, only they could not *paint*—and we are at present speaking of that minor beauty.

It was Titian who really inaugurated and brought to maturity the painter's art. Line and composition, which before his time stood pre-eminent, were not disregarded but they were made to share with color and paint the honor of pleasing the eye. Neatness, fineness, exactness, gave way to effectiveness, boldness, force. The monochrome ground-work upon which the Florentines and Romans depended for transparency was pushed aside, and Titian based his pictures in thick color, using this as a foundation to build upon. He worked over his pictures a great deal, amending and altering (it is said with his fingers which he greatly preferred to his brush), and, what with glazing and a kneading of the pigments, he produced that richness of coloring, that depth of tone and warmth of flesh, so characteristic of his work. The object of his art, like that of the Florentines, was to express pictorial creations; but he chose to embellish his expression for the purpose of pleasing the eye. In this Titian succeeded admirably, especially in color. A lover of it himself, he strove to convey his own liking to his audience, and in some of his pictures even to this day their richness and depth glow like melted garnets. So absolutely material is this beauty that one could get pleasure out of Titian's color, were his canvases hung upside down; yet it is nevertheless a beauty appealing to a noble sense, and should not be despised. The lover of paint dates the beginning of painting from Titian, not from the early Italians, as the book-lover may date the beginning of fine printing from Aldus or Elzevir, not Coster or Guttenburg. But Titian originated only one method out of many, and did not exhaust the resources of paint.

Rubens was an innovator of another sort who reversed the methods of early painters by using his grounds for shadows instead of lights, and producing the latter by opaque pigments. This was a distinct gain, says Mr. Hamerton, by making the lights actively apparent and superior to the shadows. Moreover the brilliant, energetic manner of Rubens brought to the fore another feature of painting which has become very conspicuous in our time, namely, the individuality of the painter. It was not Helena Fourment alone that appeared in the canvas, but Rubens the painter appearing in every combination of color, management of light, loading of pigments, handling of stuffs, rendering of textures. We come to know not only the majestic conception of the "Christ on the Cross" and "The Descent," but Rubens the brilliant stylist, Rubens the splendid colorist, dashing, sparkling and vigorous, Rubens the strong technician, sure of his hand and prodigal of his strength. The artist appears in his subjects but not less so in his expression, and it is in this last feature, the painter's style, that the paint-lover discovers a beauty quite as important to his mind as the loftier aim of ideas.

Rembrandt admits of no classification, for he stands alone, an exception to all rules. Were his painting less effective, it might be called tricky; and a Pre-Raphaelite would scarcely call it honest, for it is always aimed at effect regardless of truth to nature. But the wonderful results

justify any means whatsoever that he may have used. In the putting on of paint he took little pains to cover up his tracks. His brush can be followed almost anywhere, and the simplicity and directness with which he applied it, producing the results that he did, are a constant source of wonder to the artist. Velasquez was even simpler in methods. He strove little for effect and did not catch at spots of light or color. His brush seemed to move with broad, free sweeps from the very beginning of the picture, without elaboration, and without the thumbing, dragging, and working over that appears at times in the canvases of Titian and Rembrandt. His painting always appears to be done once and no more, as though, like Lambro's sword-thrust, his first stroke left little need for a second one. The trained hand of a practiced technician is apparent in it all, and it is this consciousness of certainty and power that gives fully half of the pleasure that one derives in looking at the work of Velasquez. He was a master of the brush, possibly the greatest that has ever lived; and, when it is taken into consideration that his other qualities were not inferior to his skill as a painter, we have an artist to whom the world with all its praise for him has not yet done more than half justice. Painting reached the top knotch of perfection with Velasquez, and long after him Goya seems to have cultivated his style, but his art of handling died with him and cannot be revived.

The English school was never remarkable for technical ability with the brush, and is not now. Their ideas, composition and grouping mean something, but their color very little, and their brushwork nothing at all. Wilkie and Landseer had a fresh, "smart" way of laying on pigments, which was quite effective in textures; but shallow enough and rather more flashy, flimsy, and tawdry than strong or powerful. Sir Joshua, though a very superior technician, was not quite all that English critics would make him out. Constable and Bonnington were exceptionally forcible; and for Old Chrome, Etty, Mulready, Leslie, and even Turner, whatever may be said of their other virtues, they did not excel in painting. In modern times the older men are no better. Holman Hunt never learned the grammar of the paint-brush, to say nothing of its syntax. Sir Frederick Leighton is hard, dry, and meaningless; and as for Watts, in this age of technical perfection, it is difficult to find painters who will seriously look at his pictures, so wretched are they in brush-work. To be sure, all these people have redeeming excellences, plenty of them, but if we would find any approach to good *painting* in the modern English school, we must go to the Grosvenor Gallery among the younger men and shun the Royal Academy.

In the vivacious, lively, expressive putting on of paint no school has excelled that of the Dutch. We return to them again and again as the masters of the craft—not to Dou, Netscher, and Van Mieris, those excessively clever painters of detail and *minutiæ*; but to Terborch, Franz Hals, Jan Steen, and "little Brouwer." It is before the pictures of these latter artists that the soul of the paint-lover goes out in ecstasy. And well it may, for the world of art has yet to know their betters. Sir Joshua wrote of Steen's style that "it might become even the design of Raphael," and Lord Ronald Gower wonders what could have made Sir Joshua write "that astounding statement." Possibly a love of telling the truth, and possibly a love of paint. It is not extravagance, in fact it is scant justice, for Steen could *paint* Raphael into oblivion easy enough. Raphael's conception, drawing, and composition, with Steen's brush, would have made a combination of greatness startling even to imagine. It is true, Steen's subjects were low and often vulgar, which was bad; he was satirical, which was even worse, for painting is not much of

F. CHAMPLAIN PINX

PH. TYNAIRE CO N Y

After the Gale

FREDERICK W. FEELEY. PINX.

a medium for satire, though cartooning may be ; and he was comic, often funny, which was worst of all, for there is nothing funny about art. But, if his head was not always well balanced nor his taste refined and elegant, his fingers certainly were skillful, and a fresher, broader, truer way of painting never was possessed before or since his day. Terborch is different, showing dignity and repose not only in his subjects but in his manner of treating them ; and for his rendering of textures (notably the "Satin Gown" picture), it is at once realistic without minute imitation. His brush was broad and marvelously effective with apparently little effort. This is equally true of Hals and Brouwer. The smiling musicians and fish wives of Hals are like stars in the European galleries, and who that has seen his portrait groups at Haarlem but is astounded by the sheer force of painting and strength of character in the faces.

Among the more modern of the French painters, Boucher, though clever, was rather light and frivolous in accordance with his themes ; Greuze was uneven, often painting with much force and at other times degenerating into weakness ; while Watteau was a perfect painter in his peculiar field. The painting of the latter is considered by artists to be the embodiment of liveliness and beauty, but it is in a light strain. He is to Velasquez as a Heine to a Goethe, beautiful in what he attempts, but not atttempting the very great. Content with a lawn party, or an interior of fashionably dressed people, for a subject, he is likewise content with extreme cleverness, brilliancy of effect, and playfulness of touch. His style strikes one as being an affectation, but on the contrary it is the serious painting of flippant subjects. The lightness of his themes forbade anything but a corresponding treatment, and, if his brush displayed only a beauty of dash, animation, and brilliancy, it was none the less masterly and skillful in the extreme. David, Ingres and their following were draughtsmen and advocates of the absoluteness of line, not painters in any sense. Delacroix revolted against their view in favor of an art with more feeling, passion, and emotion, and though the revolt was one of methods as well as one of conceptions, the change was more effectively shown in what was said than in the manner of saying. Delacroix declared the change in both and in all respects, and in many cases succeeded in carrying it out, but he was an innovator, a beginner, and could not bring his views to perfection. Radically different as is his painting from that of Ingres, his handling is at times ineffective, his loading meaningless, and his textures poorly rendered. A very great man was Delacroix, but greater in thought than in execution, howbeit his fingers were not unskillful, nor his color-sense lacking in acuteness.

Since Delacroix's time there has been a good deal of painting for paint's sake in France, resulting in some most excellent technicians and also in a good many extremists who have brought method into contempt by extravagance. Of the good painters one may write many pages describing their different styles and accomplishments, but a mention of two or three of them must suffice here. Vollon is a never ending source of admiration. He is a Samson of the brush in the power with which he lays on pigments. It seems to him the merest child's play to brush in the folds of a table-cloth. He apparently does it with the careless ease of an ordinary painter laying in a ground or varnishing a canvas; yet, so far from being careless in effect, each stroke he makes is precision itself and each shade or tint is just the one required and no other. The old restorers of palimpsests brushed over the manuscript with a chemical which had the effect of bringing to the light the hidden truths beneath; and Vollon's brush is not unlike theirs in effect. His hand moves, and beauty follows as by magic; yet it is not magic ; it is only the perfection of skill. And this is beauty—no matter about the kind or quality,—it is

a beauty that pleases, thrills, inspires one, and moreover it is a lasting beauty. One cannot weary of it any more than of the Winged Victory or the Crouching Venus of the Louvre. Every time we return to Vollon's work we discover some new power, some overlooked excellence, until we marvel that one life-time, long though it has been, could bring such mastery of technical conditions.

Courbet was a more uneven painter than Vollon, often doing indifferent even bad work, but at his best strong as a Titan, turbulent as a Centaur, and moody as Prometheus. The picture of "The Wave" in the gallery of the Luxembourg possesses the concentrated energy of the ocean. The mental conception has been supplemented and carried to realization by the force of the technical handling. The nature of the artist, the subjects that he chose, and the manner of his treatment, all move together along parallel lines, powerful in effect, direct in action, and at times violent and revolutionary in spirit. He has been spoken of by writers as "Courbet the realist," but one is safe in saying that he never realized anything but his own anarchical nature. When he took up a brush, something like an explosion in paint followed. There is a sort of calmness about the "Combat of Deer" in the Louvre, the suppression of a mighty energy which, though manifest, is under control. "The Wave," on the contrary, is tumultuous, overpowering, force displayed with hardly a controlling rein. This is but the character of the man. Of a strong nature he stamped strength upon his work, and, had he written an autobiography in three quarto volumes, he could not have explained his mental make-up with half the directness that he has done in the brush work of "The Wave."

Rousseau is not a man who can be so readily traced in his work, for he has no one decided bent. Versatile and many-sided, he gave a charm by the handling of paint in many ways. His strongest manner is shown in those landscapes in which solidity, not merely of painting but of impression, is displayed. One of Rousseau's conceptions, aside from atmospheric, shadowed, or chromatic beauty, was of the time-exhausting durability of nature. He saw the earth, air, and sky as firm, deep-rooted, everlasting; and painted it with a corresponding solidity and firmness, loading heavily and disregarding small effects. This seems to be his best as it is certainly his strongest style, and it is to pictures like "The Hut," where this style is shown to perfection, that we turn for Rousseau's masterpieces. The choice of method is to a great extent an indicator of the artist's mental grasp. The weak styles of Guido and Carlo Dolci are well suited to the conceptions of those men. The sweetness of the Modena Madonnas could not be told by other means than thin painting and smooth surfaces, nor could Brouwer's topers in Dutch taverns be expressed by other than broad, rugged brush-strokes. Rousseau's strong hand was servant to a stronger mind, and painted instinctively in the very spirit of the master's conception. As a painter, pure and simple, he is more satisfactory than any other landscapist, and chiefly because of his perfect mastery of mood and method.

But possibly never artist lived who so admirably suited the action to the thought as Fortuny. The pictures by him recently sold in the A. T. Stewart Collection show two different phases of his artist's nature. The "Serpent Charmer" is not only an uncanny, weird subject, but is painted in an uncanny, weird sort of way. The management of the shadows and groups in the background look as though Paracelsus or Robert Fludd had a hand in their make-up; and about the young Arab, the rug, the snake, the stork, and the seated figure, there is a Mephistophelian gleam and glitter suggestive of *diablerie* and black-art machinations. The other unfinished

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C Y TURNER. PINX

Autumn Grass

M. F. H. De Haas, pinx.

A Rainy Day

picture, "The Beach at Portici," on the contrary, is open, free, and full of healthy sunshine. The treatment is wholly different, being bright, vivacious, sparkling with light, and brilliant in the extreme. And who could be more brilliant than Fortuny! He could wring beauty out of a rag and squeeze sunshine out of a fog. Nothing escaped him in a picture. He did not despise catching and holding the eye by the flash of a jewel, the sheen of a silk, the polish of a marble, the delicacy of a rose, the lightness of a cloud. He was not loath to show his skill and strew his canvas with gem-like dashes of color and light. It was his way, and a most charming one surely, of enlivening his picture and pleasing the physical as well as the mind's eye. Poets and novelists touch up their pages with happy similes, imagery, and metaphors to brighten their theme and hold the reader, and why should not artists employ their brushes in a similar manner? To call it "style" in the one and "trickery" in the other is very absurd, not to say unjust. The dash, the fire, the richness, of Fortuny in paint is analogous to that of Gautier in literature, and, whatever the thoughts they may have given utterance to, we would not spare the brilliant style of either.

The maturity of painting is certainly exemplified in Fortuny's work, but it may be doubted if his influence, or that of Regnault, Vollon, Corot, or Diaz, have had a good effect upon their successors. The man who has not sufficient stamina to rise above the imitating of others will generally be found without sufficient judgment to discriminate between the vices and virtues of the imitated. Thus it is that artists who have carried styles to perfection are usually followed by those who catch at the style alone and carry it into the *bizarre*. From the maturity and ripeness of art there has been a tendency in modern times, among certain schools, to what Mr. Hamerton calls "over-ripeness" of painting. It is indicated by many small catchy effects in the canvas, by the distortion of the true relations of objects, by isolated glitters and glares instead of unity and concentration, and by the painty over-running and obliteration of line. The painting of Monticelli, who however only aimed at decorative color, will instance this; many pictures of the Impressionists will confirm it; and among some of the younger Parisians, to put it strongly, there is a tendency to float a canvas in paint and etch through it with a palette knife, as children draw caricatures in the wet sand of the sea-shore. Not even the paint-lover can care for such extravagance, for, though he may admire a feature here and there, yet he recognizes the necessity of a purpose and will not rhapsodize over meaningless splashes of pigment. It is not the deftness of the potter's fingers in simply handling clay, but the intelligent skill of those fingers as they mould a vase of beauty. The paint-lover knows well enough that it is, after all, the vase and the picture, the results, that are truly admirable; but, if he sees a beauty in the style of the workmanship, does he not derive an additional pleasure from the work of art?

In consideration of the delightful faculty of misunderstanding one's views so prevalent nowadays, it may be worth while to repeat that nothing in this paper is intended to prove the superiority of the hand over the head, or to show that skill in execution is equal to the power of invention. There is a charm in technical work, and, no matter how we may scale or classify the crystal bar of beauty, though one end of it may shine with a loftier splendor than the other end, yet the lowest notch of it may possess a brilliancy worthy of admiration and praise.

John C. van Dyke.